



April 30, 2002

Safety Newsletter



No. 2-02



BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL SAFETY

Each year, more than 125,000 baseball and softball players under age 15 are injured badly enough to seek treatment in hospital emergency departments. Hundreds of thousands of adults receive minor injuries in these sports. Many of the injuries can be prevented if players wear safety gear and if additional safety measures are added to the game.

To help your child avoid injuries while playing baseball or softball, follow these safety tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Consumer Product Safety Commission, and other sports and health organizations. (Note: These tips apply to adult ball players, too.)

Before your child starts a training program or plays competitive baseball or softball, take him or her to the doctor for a physical exam. The doctor can help assess any special injury risks your child may have.

Make sure your child wears all the required safety gear every time he or she plays and practices. Insist that your child wear a helmet when batting, waiting to bat, or running the bases.

Helmets should have eye protectors, either safety goggles or face guards. Shoes with molded cleats are recommended (most youth leagues prohibit the use of steel spikes). If your child is a catcher, he or she will need additional safety gear: catcher's mitt, face mask, throat guard, long-model chest protector, shin guards and athletic supporter with cup, as appropriate.

If your child is a pitcher, make sure pitching time is limited. Little League mandates time limits and requires rest periods for young pitchers.

Insist that your child warm up and stretch before playing.

Teach your child not to play through pain. If your child gets injured, see your doctor. Follow all the doctor's orders for recovery, and get the doctor's OK before your child returns to play.

Make sure first aid is available at all games and practices.

Talk to and watch your child's coach. Coaches should enforce all the rules of the game, encourage safe play, and understand the special injury risks that young players face. Make sure your child's coach teaches players how to avoid injury when sliding (prohibits headfirst sliding in young players), pitching, or dodging a ball pitched directly at them.



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Above all, keep baseball and softball fun. Putting too much focus on winning can make your child push too hard and risk injury.

Encourage your league to use breakaway bases. These bases, which detach when someone slides into them, can prevent many ankle and knee injuries in both children and adults. Leagues with players 10 years old and under should alter the rules of the game to include the use of adult pitchers or batting tees. Remember, you don't have to be on a baseball diamond to get hurt. Make sure your child wears safety gear and follows safety rules during informal baseball and softball games, too.

NEW LAW IN VIRGINIA Starting July 1, 2002

Following information provided by Concerned Citizens Advocating Traffic Safety (CCATS)

All children **under the age of 6** must continue to be properly restrained in a child restraint system while riding in a vehicle. The restraint can be a child safety seat or a booster seat.

Added reminder – all children between 6 and under 16 must be properly restrained by a child restraint system or a safety belt. Law enforcement officers can and will stop and ticket any driver of a vehicle where children under 16 years old are not properly and safely secured. Children learn by example. Buckle-up yourself, too!

Finding the Right Seat

Rear-Facing Infant Seats: Birth to at least 1 year old and at least 20 pounds.

Forward-Facing Child Safety Seats: Age 1 to about 4 and 20-40 pounds.

Booster Seats: About age 4 to at least age 8 and under 4 feet 9 inches tall.

Seat Belts: At least 8 years old or over 4 feet 9 inches tall.



As more and more cyclists take to the roads, trails, and paths this summer, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is releasing bicycle safety tips.

Each year, there are about 900 bicycle-related deaths in the United States and another half a million bicycle-related injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms. To reduce injuries, CPSC encourages riders of all ages to use helmets. Studies have shown that using bicycle helmets can reduce head injuries by up to 85 percent.

CPSC is developing a mandatory safety performance standard for bicycle helmets. In the meantime, buy a helmet that bears a label saying it meets the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard.

Wear the helmet flat atop your head. Do not wear the helmet tilted back at an angle.

Make sure the helmet fits snugly and does not obstruct your field of vision. Always wear the helmet with the chin strap firmly buckled. Make sure the chin strap fits securely and that the buckle stays fastened to provide impact protection.

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Along with using safety equipment, rider actions and reactions play a major role in contributing to injury-free cycling enjoyment. CPSC is offering consumers these additional safety tips to help ensure safe summer cycling.

- Protect your head...Wear a helmet.
- See and be seen...Wear bright fluorescent colors during the day.
- Avoid biking at night...If riding at night, equip your bicycle with head and tail lights and wear reflective clothing.
- Stay alert...Keep a lookout for obstacles in your path.
- Go with the flow...Ride with traffic.
- Check for traffic...Be aware of traffic around you.
- Learn the rules of the road...Obey traffic laws.
- Assure bicycle readiness...Is your bicycle properly adjusted?
- Check brakes before riding.
- Check your wheels..."Quick release" wheels should be securely fastened.

SAFETY DAY SAFETY DAY

Safety Awareness Day is Wednesday, 22 May 2002. Emphasis should be place on POV Safety. POV accidents are the number one killer of our soldiers and civilians. Unfortunately, we have lost one precious life this year to a POV accident. Efforts should focus on seat belt use, DUI prevention, speed, fatigue, and an individual's responsibility to safety even as a passenger

The Safety Office stands ready to assist in planning your activities or providing products for the day.

HEAT INJURY PREVENTION

A few weeks ago (April 15-29) Virginia experienced uncommonly warm weather. Temperatures soared into the 90s, breaking many records. Although it is unusual, even for Virginia, to have temperatures that high in April, warmer weather will be here before you know it. Here are some tips to prepare you as we approach the summer months:

☀ Drink more fluids (nonalcoholic), regardless of your activity level. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Warning: If your doctor generally limits the amount of fluid you drink or has you on water pills, ask him how much you should drink while the weather is hot.

☀ Don't drink liquids that contain caffeine, alcohol, or large amounts of sugar—these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also, avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.

☀ Stay indoors and, if at all possible, stay in an air-conditioned place. If your home does not have air conditioning, go to the shopping mall or public library—even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler when you go back into the heat. Call your local health department to see if there are any heat-relief shelters in your area.

☀ Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness.



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HEAT INJURY PREVENTION CONTINUED:

- ☀ Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- ☀ NEVER leave anyone (including pets) in a closed, parked vehicle.
- ☀ Although any one at any time can suffer from heat-related illness, some people are at greater risk than others. Check regularly on:

Infants and young children

People aged 65 or older

People who have a mental illness

Those who are physically ill, especially with heart disease or high blood pressure

- ☀ Visit adults at risk at least twice a day and closely watch them for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Infants and young children, of course, need much more frequent watching.

- ☀ Taking a cool shower or bath, or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off.

- ☀ If you must be out in the heat:

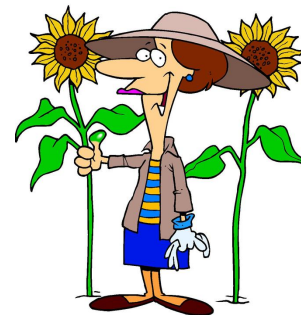
Limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours.

Cut down on exercise. If you must exercise, drink two to four glasses of cool, nonalcoholic fluids each hour. A sports beverage can replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat. Warning: If you are on a low-salt diet, talk with your doctor before drinking a sports beverage. Remember the warning in the first “tip” (above), too.

- ☀ Try to rest often in shady areas.



- ☀ Protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (also keeps you cooler) and sunglasses and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say “broad spectrum” or “UVA/UVB protection” on their labels).



- ☀ Overexposure to the sun's rays affects people of all ages and all skin types throughout the year. Believe it or not, skin cancer is the most common of all cancers and UV radiation is the most important factor in the development of skin cancer.

- ☀ Before you and your family head outdoors, learn more about the types and effects of UV radiation and how the UV Outlook Index is calculated. Also, find out how the sun's rays may affect you and what you can do to protect yourself.

• • • • • **Heat Casualty Notification Form:** If you have an employee who suffers from a Heat Injury while on duty, please complete a Heat Casualty Notification Form. This is a Microsoft form and is located under “tools” in Microsoft Outlook. Once completed, it is directly mailed to the RASH (Report a Safety Hazard) e-mail in-box.



13 May 2002 – Motorcycle Safety Course

22 May 2002 – Safety Awareness Day

24 May 2002 – Training Holiday

27 May 2002 – Memorial Day

3 June 2002 – Motorcycle Safety Course

12 June 2002 – CDSP Course

21 June 2002 – Motorcycle Safety Course

Send your comments, input or suggestions to the Safety Office, c/o Dawn Joyner, 878-3740 or e-mail at dawn.joyner@eustis.army.mil